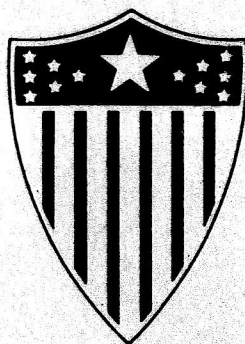


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A/A Rpt - 813th TD Bn

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HEADQUARTERS
813th TANK DESTROYER BATTALION
A.P.O. 403 U. S. ARMY

L-748

From: 0001 hrs 1 January 1945
To: 2400 hrs 31 January 1945

SUBJECT: Action Against Enemy,
Reports After/After Action Reports.

TO : Adjutant General, Washington, D.C. (T-1 Channels).

Foreword

Throughout the entire period of this report, the 813th Tank Destroyer Battalion was attached to the 79th Infantry Division with the VI Corps. On 4 January, two platoons of Co C were attached to the 845th Tank Destroyer Battalion returning to control of 813th TD Bn. On 16-17 January.

At the beginning of the period, the battalion dispositions were as follows:

	Bn CP	OBERSEBACH (119333)		
	Bn Rr	SCHULTZ-S-FOUNT (109375)		
		1st pl	2nd pl	3rd pl
Co A	STEINSELTZ (143458)	(139458)	(159509)	(175489)
Co B	WITTEBACH (264375)	(275383)	2(294425)	(325419)
Co C	OBERSEBACH (184416)	(219438)	(243411)	(243411)
Rcn	OBERSEBACH (185405)	(185405)	(185405)	(185405)

All map coordinates given here or subsequently can be located in Map Series 8383 4249, sheets W-2, STRASBOURG and W-2, WISSEMBOURG scale 1/100,000, a set of which is included in the supporting documents and papers of this report.

At the end of this report is included a list of the battalion dispositions as of 31 January. Overlays which accompany the supporting documents will afford a complete list of the movements of the battalion during the period. As will be seen from a study of these overlays and this report, the month of January 1945, was a period in which the enemy built up a strong concentration of armor North of the LAUREN RIVER, committed many new units on the VI Corps Front and especially in the sector of the 79th Inf Divisions. As a result of this strong enemy build-up, the division and the battalion adopted a defensive setup, and the whole period reflects a marked defensive tone with our forces taking little if any offensive action.

Thus in accordance with Field Order No. 1 021200 Jan 45 from Hq, 79th Inf Division, the division and attached units were ordered to initiate withdrawal from MLR No. 1 to MLR 2, using all available routes beginning at 1900 hrs, 2 Jan 45. Paragraph 3, subsection d, ordered the 813th TD Bn to remain in "present support missions with the withdrawal of direct support companies to be under regimental control". See overlay accompanying FO No. 1 Hq 79th Inf Div, 2 Jan 1945.

The withdrawal from MLR 1 was soon taken advantage of by the enemy who quickly concentrated heavy forces in WISSEMBOURG and general vicinity preparatory for an intense attack which was not long in forthcoming. From the WISSEMBOURG area to the LAUREN RIVER the enemy was observed building up for drive which eventually came to a climax in the battles for RITTERSHOFFEN Coord 1634 and HARTEN 1833, and resulted in our further with-

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After Action Reports (Cont'd)

drawing -- to a point just south of the MODER RIVER. During the interim, there had developed a further threat to our positions North of the MODER, a threat which resulted in causing our positions to become even more untenable and this was the crossing of the RHINE by the enemy who secured a strong bridgehead supported by armor in the GANESWEIM, HERRLISHEIM, and DRESENHEIM areas.

Throughout the entire period of this action, the battalion suffered more than average losses in personnel and materiel. It is significant to point out at this time that the battalion had, at the beginning of the period thirty-one M-10s all operational. At the close of the period, the battalion had but twelve M-10s. The manner of their loss will be set forth in the following pages.

1 Jan 45

There was little activity on this day. There was no change in the positions of Co A. Co B fired 120 rds of HE harrassing fire into German strongpoints at Coord 3145, 3445, 3147, and 3447 (the BIEFWALD, area inland around DUEBELBERG). Platoon leaders went back to the secondary MLR to prepare gun positions and plans were made for the Pioneer platoon of Reconnaissance Co to assist them. (See overlay No. 1). Co C also fired 120 rds of HE into enemy strong points using the four guns in the 3rd platoon and two guns from the 2nd platoon in indirect fire positions. The Bn CP remained in OBERDITSCHELDORF. Three enlisted men and one officer left for a 30 day furlough to the United States. All three enlisted men had served overseas at least 29 months and the officer, a recent battalfield commission recipient, had served approximately 33-34 months overseas.

2 Jan 45

The CP's of Companies A, B, C, and Ren moved on this day.

At 1630 hrs, Co A moved its CP to SCHLITZ-SCHUS-FOREST, Coord 1137. One M-10 each from the 2nd and 3rd platoons moved into positions on the 2nd MLR at Coord 125421. One section from each platoon remained in position on the 1st MLR, and the 1st platoon remained in indirect fire position.

Co B moved its CP from WINTENBACH Coord 2637 to RITTERS-HOFFEN Coord 1634. The 1st platoon fired 180 rds of HE at targets at Coord 3145, 3445, 3148, 3448, or approximately at the the same targets as on the previous day. Elements of the 2nd and 3rd platoons continued to prepare positions at the secondary MLR, and late in the day both platoons moved to the vicinity of HERRWEILER Coord 2639 where they set up roadblocks for the night.

Co C CP in OBERDITSCHELDORF Coord 1030. The six guns in indirect fire positions fired 210 rds of HE at the same target areas as on the previous day, then going into an assembly area in HOFFEN. The 2nd platoon covered the withdrawal of the 2nd Bn, 315th Inf Regt as it went into positions in HOFFEN.

Ren Co's three recon pls reconnoitered the Maginot Line defenses on the Division front for CPs and later to the west between LANGENSCHEIDT (9940) and INGWIILER (8130). The Cp moved to GUNSTETT (0234).

The Bn CP remained the same, but knowledge of the planned withdrawal kept all elements constantly on the alert and the need for strict security was constantly stressed.

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3 Jan 45

Throughout the day a steady stream of service, supply, and light skinned vehicles flowed south into the BRUMATE area and then southwest. This battalion had been alerted for a similar movement in the same direction, but the order never developed although the 1st Rear Echelon did move from SCULTZ-SCUS-FORET Coord 109375, several miles to the south and west to KILLERHACH Coord 710905. The majority of all the movement was in the direction of the SAVERNE GAP.

After firing 250 rds of WE on harassing missions during the early morning hours, Co A's 1st platoon moved to positions on the 2nd MLR (see overlay No. 1) at 0445 hrs, one section into positions at Coord 140410 and the other section at Coord 128423. At 0530 hrs, the 2nd platoon with a screening force moved to Coord 152470, and the 3rd platoon moved back to the 2nd MLR vic of Coord 155396. At 1700 hrs, the 2nd platoon moved to the 2nd MLR also one M910 going into position at Coord 115429, another at Coord 102436. A 3rd M-10 developed motor trouble and was taken to the town of BIRNENBACH, (105420).

At dawn, Co B's 2nd platoon accompanied by a platoon of tanks, moved to positions NW of BERNWEILER to strengthen the line which had been established the previous night by Co B's 1st platoon and a platoon of tanks. The 3rd platoon reinforced by two tanks moved to the high ground N of WENTZENBACH where they went into position. One destroyer along with the security section maintained a roadblock at the road junction S of WENTZENBACH. At 1500 hrs, all platoons started to move back to the MAGNET LINE prepared positions, closing at dusk. Prior to this move, the commander of Co B (Lt. HULL) stopped at the bridge just south of HELLERROEDEN Coord 2354, to inquire as to the plans for the blowing of that bridge. He was informed that the bridge was to be blown in five minutes, whereupon, Lt. HULL referred the bridge engineer officer to Lt. Col HUFF of the 78th Inf Div. The bridge guard and other personnel were instructed thereupon that the bridge was not to be blown until our elements had crossed. The same was done, but the incident is set down in this report to show the importance of "reconnoitering" even your own route of withdrawal more than just once during the day for which withdrawal has been ordered. All during the early part of January many of the bridges were being destroyed by our forces, and constant coordination between this battalion and adjacent units was not only advisable but absolutely vital for the success of an orderly withdrawal.

Co C located in vicinity of GUNSTETT (020353) with the 2nd and 3rd platoons in an assembly area in the town. The 1st platoon moved into position at Coord 155360 its mission to aid in preventing any enemy threat or thrust to penetrate from the west.

Reg Co moved its CP, supply section, and its pioneer platoon to ALTECHENDORF. The 1st platoon maintained an OP in WERTH, the 3rd platoon an OP at GUNDERSHOFFEN, and the 2nd platoon maintained liaison with the 645th TD bn.

4 Jan 45.

There was no change in the positions of Company A on this day, but the company was constantly on the alert for possible enemy armored thrust from the vicinity of INSULSHEIM.

Co B during the period went into support of the 242nd Regt of the 42nd Inf Div (see TF MAPL). There was no change in the positions of the Company. On the previous day as the 1st plat of Co B ~~was~~ was moving into position on the WAGNER LINE, it spotted an enemy patrol approx 1500 yds from them and took them under fire with excellent results.

Co C minus one platoon, was attached to the 645th T.D. Bn on this day and at 2100 hrs, the company CP plus the 2nd and 3rd platoons moved from GUNSTETT to SCHILLERSDORF Coord 840300. At that time, the 45th Div sector had received a major threat and considerable enemy armor was reported attempting to break through. The 1st section of Rcn Co's 2nd plat maintained liaison with the 645th T.D. Bn.

Rcn Co did not change position and performed same duties as on the previous day. Capt WILSON, Bn S-2 assumed duties as the C.O. of Rcn Co, and Capt JO FISK, Rcn C.O. became the Bn S-2.

At the Bn CP the Bn C.O., Major McCUTCHEM, after attending a meeting at 79th Inf Div Hq, briefed all the company commanders on the general situation and discussed plans for anti-tank defense of the Division sector. The Bn CP previously alerted for movement, stayed at SCHILLERSDORF.

5 Jan 45

During the period 5-7 Jan 45, the Germans crossed the RHINE S of BISSWILLER and established a bridgehead in the GAMBESHEIM-OPPELDORF-WERRLISHEIM area. As a result, it became necessary for the division to shuttle various units to the threatened area and at 1500 hrs, 5 Jan, Co B's 3rd plat was alerted and sent to BISSWILLER (090135) where aided by the 1st plat of Rcn Co and in support of the 314th Inf Regt, it set up a road block. The plat was commended by the regimental commander for its state of alertness and prompt arrival at its destination. At this time, the 2nd plat of Co C was attached to Co B. Co B's 1st plat moved into the positions vacated by the 3rd plat when it moved to BISSWILLER. The 2nd plat did not change position. Lt FINKOBS spent the day reconnoitering for T.D and A.T. positions for two regiments in the vicinity of WAGNER, vic coord 040240. The company C.O., Lt HULL coordinated all movements of the company's M-10s and contacted the new units with whom the company was to operate in the bridgehead area S of BISSWILLER.

The commander of Co C (Capt WALE) was evacuated to the hospital (sick) and 1st Lt. SEVIX assumed command of the Company. At 1400 hrs, the 2nd plat moved from SCHILLERSDORF to vicinity of BISSWILLER (895356) and took up positions covering the N and W approaches to the town. At 1530 hrs, it moved to selected positions with one section vic of 087437, the other vic of 093450. At 1400 hrs, two destroyers from the 3rd plat went into position at 844323 covering the E approach to the town of MULAUEN. Two guns moved to the NW edge of town at 865319 covering road from the NW and at 1530 hrs, moved from previous positions to selected positions with one section in position at 926441 and one gun at 944433.

There was no change in the situation as regards Co A. Rcn Co performed intensive work over the entire front, its platoons working with several different units twenty four hours per day.

After the enemy had established a bridgehead on the west bank of the RHINE RIVER on 5 Jan 45, after the preliminary smoke had cleared away, the enemy was found to have occupied also the towns of ROHR-WILLER 1217 - HERRLISHEIM 1214 - OFFENDORF 1312 - and GAMBSHEIM 1110. On the Northern sector of the division only patrols were encountered. No Panzer units were yet identified on the division front, but this Battalion was constantly on alert for a strong enemy armored thrust.

6 Jan 45 The Bn CP was still in OBERBETSCHDORF at the beginning of the day but had been alerted by division for immediate movement to the southwest. The CP did not move, however, but remained in the town until the following day. Meanwhile, the enemy on the northern front, had occupied REIDSELTZ 1543, INGOLSHEIM 1441, OBERSEEBACH 1840 and north of STUDWILLER. In the bridgehead area in which part of our battalion had been committed, the enemy continued to hold its gains and resisted fiercely any efforts to dislodge them. Prisoners from the 21st Pz Div Rcn Bn were taken during the day, and it was then safe to assume that the Rcn Bn would be followed almost immediately by the 21st Pz Div itself. The assumption was not long in proving itself. The Rcn Bn was identified as operating in the WISSEM BOURG area. Two days later the division was also identified in that sector.

At 1100 hrs, Co A's 1st platoon fired 7 rds of HE at an enemy halftrack which they could hear but were unable to see because of the heavy fog. The vehicle was about 500 yds from their position. The destroyer crews also fired their carbines at enemy infantry no more than 100 yds from their positions. As has been stated, the fog was most intense and as a result constant watch was most necessary as it was not at all difficult for enemy foot troops to slip by our own infantry and advance within very close distance of our M-10s. Moreover the enemy infantry were effectively camouflaged in their white clothing, and were not easily detected in the snow covered terrain. There were several instances of German soldiers infiltrating through our lines in American uniforms or in civilian clothes. As a result of the penetration of Belgium and Luxembourg in VON RUNDSTEDT'S December offensive, many uniforms were taken along with other American supplies and materiel. Some of this booty was used in the Seventh Army sector and not infrequently in the sector of the 79th Inf Div and the 813th TD Bn.

Co B moved its CP from RITTERSHOFFEN 158338 to NIEDERBETSCHDORF 136333. The 1st and 2nd platoons remained in present locations and the platoon leaders reconnoitered for positions to the North in order to coordinate with the 2nd platoon of Co C. This latter platoon did not change position and during the period, one of its destroyers and its security section did move to STUNDWILLER Coord 187363 to help hold the town against a strong enemy patrol. There was no action, however, which demanded their remaining in STUDWILLER and at dusk the destroyer and the section returned to their former positions. The 3rd platoon of the company supported the attack of the 2nd battalion of the 314th Inf Regt and at dusk, the platoon closed into positions at DRUSENHEIM 157180.

The 1st section of Co C's 2nd platoon moved from its old position to 067437. Rcn Co's 3rd platoon was attached to Co C

After Action Reports (Cont'd)

At 1000 hrs, Co C moved its CP from S CHILLERSDORF to GUNDERSHOFFEN, Coord 347339. The 3rd platoon did not move.

Rcn Co continued to perform same duties as on previous day. Its 1st platoon was attached to Co B in the DRUSENHEIM sector, (CoB's 3rd pl.).

7 Jan 45

The enemy front lines remained approximately the same. Co A: At 1000 hrs the 4th destroyer from the 1st plat and the 3rd destroyer from the 2nd plt moved to positions in vic of 135375 to meet an enemy tank threat, S/Sgt Belfonti in charge of the section. At 1300 hrs, the 1st section of the 1st plat. fired 18 rds of HE at enemy foot troops and A.T. guns towed by halftracks, vic of 146422 at a range of approximately 3000 yds. The enemy troops were dispersed, but the extent of the damage was not readily ascertainable. At 1500 hrs, the 3rd plat fired 4 rds of APC and 1 rd of HE at an enemy halftrack vic of 160402. The plat also observed 23 enemy foot troops enter a house vic of 155402 and fired 3 rds of HE into the house. No troops left the house. At 1630 hrs, the 3rd plat fired 5 rds HE at enemy foot troops and one vehicle vic of 159401. Sgt Piver of the 3rd plat also directed artillery on foot troops in approx the same area.

The platoon of Co C which was attached to Co B engaged six enemy tanks during the day and lost two M-10s as a result of enemy action. Two sergeants and one private were killed, three men wounded, two men missing, and one man hospitalized for nervous exhaustion. Co B's CP remained in NIEDERBETSCHDORF. At 1600 hrs, one destroyer moved to 185342 from which it fired 10 rds HE, 5 rds APC and 5 rds T-105, at a church steeple at 187363 with fair results. The destroyer returned to original position with the 1st plat. At 1130 hrs, the 2nd plat moved to Coord 179360 in order to strengthen that sector against a developing threat. The 3rd plat remained at same position and during the period, knocked out one tank, tank unable to be identified because of situation. Late in the day, two of its destroyers were evacuated, one with motor trouble, and the other damaged as a result of enemy artillery action.

Rcn Co's 2nd plat alerted at 0900 for mission near the town of KURTZENHAUSEN 055156, but the mission was changed at 1100 hrs, to make reconnaissance of position area for the 827th T.D. Bn in the vicinity of 165345 and guide the unit into position after darkness had set in. The other platoons continued on previous missions.

The 827th T.D. Bn. (Colored) arrived in the sector during this period and subsequently one company was put under control of this battalion. Later the whole battalion was put under the control of the C.O. of the 813th T.D. Bn, Major McCUTCHEN, commanding.

Later in the period it was definitely learned that Co A had knocked out an SP gun as a result of its firing earlier, see above.

The Bn CP moved from OBERBETSCHDORF to vic of SURBOURG closing at 1145 hrs, at Coord 088345. The first of some heavy snowfalls had begun making the roads dangerous in several places. In the following days there were numerous instances of vehicles of all types sliding off the roads due to the ice and snow and subsequent withdrawals resulted in many other

After Action Reports (Cont'd)
vehicles being damaged.

8 Jan 45

At 0900 hrs, the 4th destroyer of the 1st plat and the 3rd destroyer of the 2nd plat (Co A) moved to a reserve position at 124405. At 1200 hrs, the 4th destroyer crew of the 3rd plat began firing on enemy foottroops in vic of 170388 killing or wounding approximately 20. The crew also fired on two tanks in hull down positions at 172387, results not ascertained. At 1345 hrs, the crew destroyed one enemy halftrack vic of 170388, the halftrack burning up completely. The ammo expended in these actions : 44 rds of APC and 36 rds of HE. At 1110-1130 hrs, the 1st section of the 1st plat fired 9 rds of HE at 2 enemy machine guns and foot troops in vic of 149421 destroying the machine guns.

During the day one destroyer of Co B again fired at the church steeple at coord 187363 and the enemy operating the OP were driven from the steeple. Later in the day, one destroyer moved to 191317 to coordinate with the 827th T.D. Bn. The 2nd plat destroyed an enemy MG nest at 187363 and forced the enemy troops into the open where they were effectively dealt with by our own infantry. The platoon was relieved at 1500 hrs by the 827th T.D. Bn destroyers and went into reserve at 158338. At 2200 hrs, the plat moved into position at 177362 coordinating with other elements of the 827th. Re Co B's 3rd plat during the attack on the bridgehead, one of the destroyers crossed the bridge at 157179 and almost immediately thereafter, the bridge broke leaving the destroyer without means of getting back across the stream which was thought impossible of crossing with an M-10. In the counterattack by the enemy, orders were given by the inf C.O. to destroy the M-10, but Lt. ATTERBURY was reluctant to comply with the order until he had explored every possible chance for escape. He waded into the river in search of a crossing and his diligence and courage were rewarded by his finding one avenue of escape. He found Teller mines planted along the place where he intended to ford the river and personally removed enough of them to afford the M-10 safe crossing. The M-10 got back safely, with all its crew. Lt. ATTERBURY then waded the stream again to organize an infantry plat which had become somewhat scattered, but while doing this, he observed a Mk V tank approaching. He started back to his plat, but was severely wounded along the way but did reach his platoon. From there he directed fire upon the enemy tank until it was knocked out. He then allowed himself to be evacuated. Sgt Sherry then assumed command of the platoon. Co C's 2nd plat attached to Co B finished off an enemy tank which had blown a track in entering one of our minefields. At 1500 hrs, the plat moved to 158338 where it went into reserve.

Co C's 2nd and 3rd platoons remained in their same positions receiving sporadic artillery fire. The snow became increasingly heavy around their positions.

Rcn Co's 2nd plat reconnoitered various areas in the GUNSTETT district coord 0235. The rest of the company continued to perform the usual tasks.

The Bn CP departed SURBOURG and traveled to within a few kilometers of BIBLISHEIM closing at 1130 hrs at Coord 064338, a leather factory and tannery which was sufficiently large to house all the enlisted personnel.

9 Jan 45 HATTEN-RITTERSH OFFEN AREA: Co A: The 1st destroyer of the 1st platoon of Co A fired two rds of HE at an enemy truck in vic of 149422 but failed to hit it--a knockout blow. At 1200 hrs, the 2nd destroyer of the 1st plat received two direct hits from enemy mortars but there was no damage to the M-10 nor injury to the crew. At 1440 hrs, the 3rd destroyer of the 3rd plat fired 7 rds of APC and 3 rds of HE at an enemy command vehicle vic of 164405, but failed to destroy it. At 1500 hrs, the 3rd destroyer of the 2nd plat moved to a position in vic of 143407 and fired 10 rds of HE into a suspected enemy OP in the church steeple at INGOLSHEIM 150414 scoring 10 hits on the steeple. At 1520 hrs, the crew of the 1st destroyer of the 1st plat fired 1 rd of HE into an enemy command vehicle vic 149422 setting it on fire and five man crew was observed fleeing from the blazing vehicle. The crew of the destroyer then fired 3 rds of HE into the ground killing ~~all~~ wounding all of the enemy. At 1635 hrs, the 3rd destroyer crew of the 3rd plat fired 4 rds of APC at another enemy command vehicle vic of 164405 setting it also on fire. After this action, it was learned that the destroyer's sight bracket had become defective. During this period, the 2nd destroyer of the 1st plat was under intense enemy mortar fire.

Co B: Early in the day enemy infantry infiltrated into our position and threw a hand grenade into one of the destroyers of Co B's 1st plat, wounding the entire crew and capturing the destroyer. The platoon then moved into HATTEN 180336, and as a result of an enemy counter attack the platoon was temporarily cut off-- until reached by 1st Lt. KOLHOSS. Lt. KOLHOSS organized an infantry defense, returned to the plat, maneuvered a destroyer to a position from which he burned a German tank which had been immobilized previously. Later in the period another destroyer was surrounded by infiltrating enemy foot troops and the crew was captured. Amid all the confusion, our artillery poured a heavy concentration upon the town which resulting in the remaining destroyer being knocked out and burned. At dusk, as the situation cleared somewhat, Lt. KOLHOSS tried to devise some method of retrieving the surrounded destroyer but was informed that it had been booby trapped. Co B's 2nd and 3rd plats remained at their present locations. See overlay of same date on Battalion dispositions. The 2nd plat of Co C attached to Co B moved to vic of 160308 from which point they knocked out a Mk V tank. The plat lost one M-10 during the action. The remaining destroyer went into reserve at 337159. Total casualties for Co B with plat of Co C attached for the day were: 1 officer and six E.M. wounded, six men missing.

Co C minus the 2nd platoon received the usual harrassing artillery fire in their positions. There was no change in location, however, and no casualties.

Rcn Cds plats were located as follows: 1st plat at BISCHWILLER, the 2nd plat at a point close to HATTEN, the 3rd plat in FROESCHWILLER, and the company CP with pioneer plat in the town of GUNSTETT.

The Bn CP remained near BIBLISHEIM. Two ME 262 Jet Propeller planes were over the Bn area and did considerable strafing in RITTERSHOFFEN. Through the following eight or nine days the enemy aircraft was quite active regardless of weather conditions.

After Action Reports (Cont'd)

9 Jan. The battle for HATTEN and RITTERSHOFFEN still raged at the beginning of the period. Numerous enemy tanks were observed in the woods just outside HATTEN and it was apparent that the enemy had no present thought of withdrawing from this area despite the heavy casualties it was suffering both in men and materiel. At this time the enemy front lines on the northern front which was then known as TF WAHL (Brigadier General WAHL of the 79th Inf Div) stretched from CLEEBOURG 1144, INGOLSHEIM 1441, ASCHBACH 1837, STUNDWILLER 1836, BUHL 2035, 195320 and 222305. In the bridgehead area in which Co B and Rcn elements were operating in support of the infantry, the front lines were as follows: FT LOUIS 2322, southern half of DRUSENHEIM 1517, southern part of HERRLISHEIM 1214, OFFENDORF 1312, and GAMBSHEIM 1110. Enemy aircraft was very active during the day especially the jet propelled ME 262s which bombed and strafed SURBOURG, SOULTZ-SOUS-FORET, RITTERSHOFFEN, and the NIEDERBETSCHDORF areas. One bomb fell within yards of the CP of Co B in the BETSCHDORF bombing.

At 1100 hrs, the 1st section of Co A's 1st plat received direct fire from either 20mm or 37mm guns, and this fire continued at various intervals throughout the day. At 1430 hrs, the 3rd destroyer of the 2nd plat upon receiving a report from the infantry of two enemy using the church steeple in INGOLSHEIM as an OP, moved to a position in vic of 143407 and fired 5 rds of HE into the steeple and returned to former position. At 1700 hrs, the 3rd destroyer of the 1st plat moved to an alternate position vic of 125421..

Co B tried during the day to retrieve the destroyer which had been stranded in HATTEN at coord 180335, but all attempts to accomplish this met with no success. The rest of the day saw the company aiding the 827th TD Bn in going into various positions along the line..

Co C's two platoons attached to the 645th TD Bn were under sporadic enemy mortar fire in the LEMBACH area. At the end of the day, the 645th TD Bn moved two guns to the rear of the positions of the 2nd plat of Co C. in the vic of Coord 057398.

Rcn Co's Cp and the 2nd plat plus one sec of the pioneer plat remained bivouaced in GUNSTETT. During the day the 1st section of the pioneer plat established and maintained an OP and outpost south of HATTEN along the edge of the forest with the 1st platoon, with the mission of covering the roads and trails to the SE of HATTEN and NIEDERBETSCHDORF. The remainder of the company continued to perform the same duties as on the previous day. Enemy artillery and bombing threatened their positions.

The Bn CP remained near BIBLISHEIM. There were frequent conferences between the Bn C.O., Major McCUTCHEN and General WAHL concerning the TD and anti-tank defense of the enlarged division sector.

10 Jan 45 The enemy attack on RITTERSHOFFEN continued throughout the day, and during the period the 827th TD Bn attached to the 813th TD Bn under Major McCUTCHEN, knocked out four Mk IV tanks. Considerable enemy mortar and artillery fire fell in RITTERSHOFFEN. Trains of Co B's CP moved from OBERBETSCHDORF to SURBOURG but the CP ~~moved from~~ did not move.

The 2nd plat remained at the present location although subjected to an intense artillery fire which scored a direct hit on one of the destroyers. Neither casualties nor damage resulted, however. The 3rd plat fired 10 rds of HE and four stat illuminating shells, results not ascertainable.

There was little other activity. The 2nd plat of Co C attached to Co B moved from their positions at 156333 to 139332. The Bn CP remained the same. More enemy air activity over the Bn area.

11 Jan 45 Late in the evening of 11 Jan 45, the enemy became
to very aggressive in the town of HATTEN. Enemy tanks and inf-
12 Jan 45 antry in an all night attack succeeded in forcing one batt.
of our infantry to withdraw to the southwestern part of the
town at which place the enemy was prevented from enlarging
upon their gains. Fighting was bitter, and in addition to
the units already identified in contact was the late appear-
ance of the 937th Inf Regt, 245th VG Div.

All firing platoon positions of Companies A,B,C, and
also Rcn Company received sporadic mortar and artillery fire
In the bridgehead area, There was considerable patrol
activity by the enemy. The enemy front lines: FT. LOUIS,
2322, southern part of DRUSENHEIM 1517, HERRLISHEIM 1214,
and GAMBSHEIM 1110.

In our attack on RITTERSHOFFEN during the 12 Jan 45,
the enemy put up very stiff resistance, and there was con-
siderable house to house fighting with the Germans employ-
ing artillery, mortar, tank, and small arms fire. About
ten tanks were operating in or near the town during the day.
The cemetery near the apex of the action was strongly held
and the Germans had installed one Mk VI tank near the church
in the town which proved extremely troublesome, despite the
fact that adjacent friendly units had scored approximately
six bazooka hits upon it in 36 hours. In HATTEN, the 827th
TD Bn attached to this Bn scored a knock out hit on a Mk IV
tank and also knocked out an enemy scout car. Enemy artillery
fire interdicted the RITTERSHOFFEN-KUHLENDORF(1335) and the
RITTERSHOFFEN - NIEDERBETSCHDORF roads. Our friendly artill-
ery was very effective and destroyed several tanks by indirec
fire.

In the bridgehead area, the front lines remained the same
but DRUSENHEIM and ROHRWILLER received mortar and artillery
fire. There were repeated instances of German soldiers be-
ing apprehended infiltrating into our lines dressed in Amer-
ican uniform and several cases of enemy agents apprehended
in civilian clothes.

13 Jan 45 On 13 Jan 45 the enemy front lines on the northern front
facing Task Force WAHL, were as follows: CLEEBOURG 1144,
INGOLSHEIM 1441, ASCHBACH 1837, STUDWILLER 1836, BUHL 2035,
eastern part of RITTERSHOFFEN 1533, eastern part of HATTEN,
and 222305. There was no change in the bridgehead area. En-
air activity was rather intense with 3 FW 190s over the Bn
positions at 1220 hrs, 4 ME 262s at 1220 hrs, 2 ME 262s at
1315 hrs, and also at 1605 hrs. The jet propelled planes
bombed and strafed the vic 120232, SCHWABWILLER and OBERBETS-
DORF. The Bn suffered no loss of personnel or damage to ma-
terial in these raids.

One destroyer of Co A's 2nd platoon at 1500 hrs observed
several enemy halftracks towing guns in the vic of 136478 and
promptly fired 6 rds of HE at them at a range of about 3500 yd
causing to burn up. After this episode, the destroyer also
fired 9 rds of HE at enemy soldiers pulling sleds in the vic
of 118451 killing or wounding several of them and dispersing
the rest. Co B moved its CP to SURBOURG 083345, but the plat
positions remained the same. (See overlay of 13 Jan 45).

The plat attchd to B returned to Co C. No change in RCN.

After Action Reports (Cont'd)

14 Jan 45

There was little change in the locations of the Bn elements on this day. The 1st section of Co A's 1st plat received an arty concentration at approximately 1030 hrs, and one sergeant was wounded and evacuated to the hospital.

There was some air activity over the Bn area and one enemy plane dropped some anti-personnel bombs one of which landed thirty yds from the Bn CP severing the telephone line, but causing no casualties. There was an 8 second delay in explosion of some of the anti-personnel bombs including the one which severed the BN CP telephone line.

Fighting continued in the HATTEN-RITTERSHOFFEN area, and enemy aircraft bombed towns just west of the fighting namely OBERBETSCHDORF, NIEDERBETSCHDORF, SCHWABWILLER, SURBOURG, and immediate vicinity.

15 Jan 45

Co A in conjunction with adjacent artillery units fired two star shells over INGOLSHEIM at 1930 hrs, results very satisfactory. Co B had some men man an M-18 acquired from the 827th TD Bn after a very brief training course. Later these men relieved other crews who were manning M-18s on the front so that these men might return for additional training on this type of destroyer. Rcn Co continued to patrol south of HATTEN in and through the forest.

The enemy in pressing the fighting in HATTEN used flame-throwing tanks, and heavy fighting continued to be the fate of RITTERSHOFFEN. During the night, HAGENAU itself received fire from a heavy gun possibly a 280mm gun. All gun positions were subjected to the usual artillery and mortar barrages from the enemy.

16 Jan 45

Enemy jet propelled planes were again active during the day, strafing and bombing with anti-personnel bombs in the towns of NIEDERBETSCHDORF and SCHWABWILLER in addition to two rockets fired into KUHLENDORF.

Co A's 1st plat fired 10 rds of HE at enemy direct fire weapon in the vic of 135405 silencing the weapon. All of Co A's plats received harrassing artillery fire during the night, as did all the other plats including those of Rcn Co.

Co C's two plats attached to the 645th TD Bn were relieved by the 614th TD Bn and returned to company control.

17 Jan 45

On the 17th of Jan, the front lines were approximately the same. There was no change in the situation appreciately. Co B's 2nd plat knocked out a light enemy tank at 180346. Co C's two plats recently released from the 45th Inf Div sector went into an assembly area vic of SURBOURG and Co C moved its CP from GUNDERSHOFFEN to SURBOURG. Reconnaissance for routes of approach into the positions of Cos A and B was also undertaken and accomplished. In addition to en units already named, the 7th Para Div was identified in the division sector.

18 Jan 45

Co A was active during the day shooting at various targets: at 1600 hrs, the 1st section of the 1st plat fired 4 rds of HE at enemy foottroops and at a suspected anti-tank position in the vic of 151426, and fired one rd of HE at en foot troops in the vic of 142435. The troops were dispersed. Also at 1600 hrs, the 2nd destroyer of the 3rd plat fired

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rds of HE at an enemy command vehicle vic of 168407 but failed to destroy it. At 1700 hrs, the 1st sec of the 1st plat fired 4 rds of HE at enemy troops who had entered a house in the vic of 148442 setting the house on fire. Again at 1710 hrs, the section fired, this time at an enemy gun emplacement vic of 150445. Four rds were shot into the emplacement but the results could not be determined. Finally, at 1730 hrs, the section fired 2 rds of HE at enemy foot troops vic of 145440 dispersing them.

Co B's 2nd platoon was subjected to a heavy concentration of arty fire by the enemy and four casualties resulted: 1 officer, the company commander, Lt. HULL, and three E.M. One of the E.M. was wounded seriously while the officer and the other two E.M. were painfully but less gravely injured.

Rcn Co moved to OBERBETSCHDORF. All the Rcn plats including the pioneer plat patrolled the forest south of the MLR and southeast of the forest to a point where they contacted the 94th Cav Sqdrn. OBERBETSCHDORF was shelled during the day subsequent to Rcn Co's moving into the town. Late in the day Rcn's 3rd plat led Co C to SOUFFLENHEIM. Co C had been alerted and ordered to move VOCO, 79th Inf Div, to the bridgehead area and to go under the command of Task Force LINDEN.

19 Jan 45

Two destroyers of Co A moved into HATTEN in support of the 2nd Bn, 315th Inf Regt. Harrassing fire from the enemy continued throughout the day. Co B engaged two Mk V tanks observed at 167198 and fire was directed by S/Sgt Blake who was wounded and evacuated during the action. The damage to the enemy tanks could not be ascertained. Lt. ROBBINS led a platoon into HATTEN and successfully retrieved a company half track which had been immobilized for a few days previous.

Co C's 2nd plat and two guns from the 3rd plat took up positions south and east of SOUFFLENHEIM. Soon after, enemy arty and mortar fire began to comb their positions. One plat of the 827th TD Bn attached to Co C was later in the day detached from the company and ordered to move to SCHIRRHOFEN.

During the night of 19 Jan 45, the 3rd platoon of Co B which was supporting the 2nd Bn of the 314th Inf Regt was surrounded by infantry which had infiltrated into our positions after having surprised, surrounded and captured the 2nd Bn of the 314th Inf. Full details of what took place that night in the DRUSENHEIM sector are still lacking, but the enemy captured four M-10s together with crews and the battalion of infantry just mentioned. The loss of these M-10 destroyers seriously weakened the anti-tank SP defense in the bridgehead area. Many conjectures have been offered as to how the enemy was able to surround and capture our TDs and infantry, but it is important to point out that the weather had much to do with the successful coup of the infiltrating enemy foottroops. The snow, the haze of mist which hung over the area cutting visibility to almost zero facilitated every movement of the enemy to his advantage and to our detriment. Climatic conditions which highly favored the enemy's offensive tactics rather than lack of security upon our part were the decisive factors which led to the encirclement and eventual capture of a battalion of infantry and a platoon of four TDs.

20 Jan 45

At 1700 hrs the Cp of Co A moved to BERSTHEIM closing at 2400 hrs. At 1700hrs, the 2nd platoon began withdrawing from their positions, at 107435, however, the 4th destroyer of the platoon slipped off the road and became stuck. The 1st and 2nd destroyers moved as far as 103422 whereupon the 2nd destroyer slipped off the road likewise. The 1st destroyer moved on to 109422 at which point it also slipped off the road and became stuck.

At this point, the platoon and company maintenance endeavored to extricate these M-10s but met with no success as the roads were extremely slippery and snow and ice was constantly accumulating. At 0500 hrs, 21 Jan 45, the 2nd plat officer finding that they would be unable to retrieve the M-10s ordered them destroyed and the order was carried out. At 1700 hrs, the 3rd destroyer of the 1st plat and the 1st destroyer of the 3rd plat started out for BERSTHEIM but because of the difficult going, were unable to get there before 0400 hrs, 21 Jan 45. Lt BRUNJES with the 3rd and 4th destroyers of the 3rd plat and Lt. BOLESTRIDGE with the 1st and 2nd destroyers of the 1st plat remained in position as a screening force during this withdrawal. At 0500 hrs, however, began withdrawing towards SCHWEIGHAUSEN and at 124395 the 2nd destroyer slipped off the road. After attempts to retrieve it proved unsuccessful, the officer ordered the M-10 destroyed. This made the fourth M-10 to be destroyed to frustrate their falling into the possession of the enemy who were sure to capitalize upon the withdrawal once the move became known to them. The remaining destroyer proceeded on to SCHWEIGHAUSEN arriving there late in the morning. At 0500 hrs, S/Sgt BELFONTE with the 4th destroyer of the 1st plat and the 3rd destroyer of the 2nd plat moved out and marched to BERSTHEIM. At 1000 hrs, Lt BRUNJES with the 3rd and 4th destroyers of the 3rd plat arrived at BERSTHEIM.

After a brief rest following this hectic morning of 21 Jan, the M-10s were moved into position as follows: at 2000 hrs, 21 Jan, Lt OREN with the remaining destroyer of the 2nd plat moved into position at HAGENAU; Lt. BRUNJES with the 4th destroyer of the 1st plat moved into position at NEUBOURG; Lt. BOLESTRIDGE with the 1st and 3rd destroyers of the 1st plat moved into position at SCHWEIGHAUSEN. At 2130 hrs, Lt SPEELMAN of Reconnaissance company moved into position at SCHWEIGHAUSEN and then moved on to join Lt BRUNJES at NEUBOURG.

After all this movement which resulted in the destroying of four M-10s to prevent their falling into enemy hands, the Bn CP received official confirmation of four of Co B's M-10s being captured in the DRUSENHEIM bridgehead area together with twenty three enlisted personnel. From these two affairs, the Battalion was now short eight M-10s and four complete M-10 crews.

Rcn Co moved to ALTECKENDORF, 200900.

The Battalion was not long in the town of SURBOURG when the orders for the withdrawal to south of the MODER River was announced, so the Bn CP moved out of SURBOURG at 0530 hrs, and moved to SCHWINDRATZHEIM closing at 0745 hrs, near the division CP.

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20-21 Jan cont'd Co C at 1015 hrs, had one destroyer fired upon at 184235 (20 Jan) fired upon upon by what was believed to be an A.T. gun from the vic of N. SESENHEIM. Lt DENNY the platoon leader, reported the gun out of action, as a result of this enemy fire. As the piece could not fire, the remaining M-10 took the A.T. gun under fire destroying it. In addition, the M-10 shot up a house near the A.T. gun. The house was known to contain enemy troops within it. At 1030 hrs, just before the company T-2 arrived to retrieve the damaged M-10, the M-10 was again fired at by another A.T. gun and this time the destroyer was set on fire. This made the ninth M-10 lost to the Battalion within the 24 hour period of the withdrawal and the action in the DRUSENHEIM bridgehead sector. At 1920 hrs, 20 Jan, the three remaining destroyers were moved in conjunction with the 313th and 314th Inf Regts to an assembly position in HAGENAU, each destroyer carrying 15 infantry personnel on it. Two M-10s remaining in position in SOUFELNHEIM in support of the 1st Bn of the 313th Inf Regt. acting as rear guards for the movement out. At 0530 hrs, 21 Jan, these two guns were moved into an assembly area in HAGENAU and at 1600 hrs, the 2nd and 3rd plats consisting of six M-10s took up positions on the MLR between HAGENAU and BIS HWILLER. At 1700 hrs, the sector of the company was changed resulting in the movement of two guns to the NW of BISCHWILLER with the new company sector defined as BETWEEN KALTENHOUSE AND HAGENAU, an extremely wide sector to cover, but necessary because of the critical shortage of M-10s. The company set up its Cp in HAGENAU also.

Co B's 2nd plt moved into positions at 063229.

Rcn Co continued to perform liaison and OP duties. The two M-8s with Co A's M-10 remained in position at NEUBOURG.

During 21 Jan, the Bn CP was informed that Co A of the 781st Tank Bn was attached to this Bn. by VOCO, 79th Inf Div.

The Bn was also informed that it would receive in lieu of M-10s, seven M-18s. The Bn had never trained on M-18s and their assignment to this Battalion at such a critical period did not add to or improve the situation, since it was then and still is now the opinion of this Battalion that the M-10 is a superior TD to the M-18 in every particular. However, the situation demanded that the Battalion be supplied with some form of TD weapon, and since M-10s could not be obtained, the Bn proceeded to orient its crews on the M-18.

22 Jan 45

The front lines were now the River MODER itself. The bridges across the MODER had been blown by our engineers after the withdrawal to the new MLR south of the river, and our destroyers were now facing the enemy from positions not far from the south banks of the river.

Co A: At 1400 hrs, the 4th destroyer of Co A's 3rd plat was in position at 042246 and upon order of the infantry began firing at enemy infantry at 052244. The crew had fired 5 rds of HE when they were fired upon by an enemy tank. The M-10 was set on fire from the round fired by the enemy tank and the crew sergeant, Sgt. CLONTS, and driver, T-4 DIESEL were killed. Without regard for their own safety and showing high courage, two other members of the crew, Pfc MOSES and Pvt ALLEN exposed themselves to enemy fire and extricated the bodies which were already starting to burn. In addition to evacuating

After Action Reports (Cont'd)

the bodies, these two men also attempted to extinguish the fire in the destroyer itself but were unable to do so. Both of these men have been recommended for awards. At 1600 hrs, the remaining destroyer of the 2nd plat in position at 042246, received three direct hits from an enemy tank and two personnel were wounded and evacuated to the hospital. As a result of this action, the total M-10s lost to the battalion mounted to 11.

At 0900 hrs, this day, the company received four M-18s and men of the 2nd plat were given a brief drivers instruction on them. After this all too brief training period, three M-18s manned by crews of the 2nd plat moved into an assembly area in HAGENAU. At 1800 hrs, Lt. BRUNJES with the 4th destroyer of the 1st plat was relieved by the tanks previously referred in this report. Lt. BRUNJES took command of the three M-18s in HAGENAU. At 1900 hrs, the 1st plat was relieved by tanks and moved to an assembly area in NIEDERSCHAEFFOLSHEIM. A company of the 827th TD Bn was detached when tanks from the 12th Arm Div relieved some of our destroyers. Co A of the 781st Tank Battalion was subsequently attached to the 315th Inf Regt and not to this Battalion.

During the day the 2nd plat of Co B demolished a tower 069232 by direct fire. Men from the company were sent to the Bn CP for training on the M-18, and there was a redistribution of the seven M-18s in the Battalion with Co A receiving four (as stated above) and Co B retaining one, the remainder to Co C.

The 1st plat of Rcn Co relieved the 2nd plat at NEUBOURG and the pioneer plat maintained liaison with the adjacent TD unit. The remainder of the company remained in ALTEKENDORF.

The 827th TD Bn was officially relieved of attachment to this Battalion on this day as of 2400 hrs.

23 Jan 45

The enemy front lines on the northern TASK FORCE WAHL sector still remained the North bank of the river MODER. A considerable number of enemy tanks was reported during the period by air observation plane. All bridges across the MODER, had, however, been blown previously, and throughout the period, the enemy made no real or apparent attempt to throw a bridge across the river.

On 22 Jan as has been noted above, one of Co A's M-10s received three hits from an enemy tank. The M-10 was disabled but not burned and frequent attempts were initiated to retrieve the M-10. The first of these took place at 0200 hrs, 23 Jan, when the company maintenance section tried without success to extricate the M-10 by employing its T-2, but the T-2 could not pull the M-10 out. The work of the section was made more difficult by the fact that there were numerous buildings burning in HAGENAU and the blaze exposed them to heavy small arms fire from the north bank of the river MODER. At 0725 hrs, the 1st plat moved into the SW side of HAGENAU and Lt. BOLESTRIDGE contacted Lt. OREN of the 2nd plat and made plans to meet the enemy tank threat from the NE. During this time the disabled M-10 remained in place and another attempt was being made to retrieve it when something happened to make the attempt unnecessary. It seems that the skies held the threat of more snow, but during the morning visibility across the MODER was still fair. However, during the later part of the day, at approximately 1700 hrs, snow began to fall, and through the first thickening flurry one round from an enemy tank pierced the disabled M-10 and set it on fire. Only one round was fired, and it was the opinion of those present that the tank had laid in waiting all the day for

After Action Reports (it'd)

the purpose of firing a disabling shot without being observed. If that was the purpose, it was most successful for the enemy and most disastrous for us as visibility was zero after the M-10 had been knocked out.

Co B moved its CP to BATZENDORF.

Co C's platoon positions received sporadic artillery fire throughout the period. Jet-propelled ME 262 planes dropped two bombs in KALTENHOUSE and in WEITBRUCH, the location of the company CP, the planes dropped eight bombs. No casualties.

Rcn Co placed one M-8 in position at SCHWEIGHAUSEN at 002242. The two M-8s in NEUBOURG remained there, and one NCO (Sgt MILLER) maintained liaison with the 636th TD Bn.

24 Jan 45 There was no change in the situation as regards Cos A, B, C. Rcn's 2nd plat relieved the first plat with two M-8s at NEUBOURG at coord 95826. One M-8 fired on a enemy patrol wounding or killing one of the patrol. The platoon received some mortar and artillery fire during the day. The 3rd plat with one M-8 in SCHWEIGHAUSEN at 002245 came under heavy enemy artillery fire when the town was shelled. The pioneer plat was engaged in preparing gun positions for Co A at coord 042244. At 2230, the enemy again shelled SCHWEIGHAUSEN heavily and then attacked with a considerable number of infantry exact number not known. Sgt. FORDE and his M-8 crew were ordered to aid the infantry in the vic of 976256. On the route, the vehicle suffered some close landing rounds and shrapnel sprayed against the sides of the vehicle. The crew then engaged an enemy MG emplaced at 976256 killing or wounding the crew and causing other enemy foot troops to be dispersed. One of the crew members is still missing as a result of this action. On the return trip, the M-8 slid off the slippery road into a ditch and one man was slightly wounded. The Bn CP remained in SCHWINDRATZHEIM.

25 Jan 45 At 0515 hrs, one company A received information of an enemy tank thrust at SCHWEIGHAUSEN and at 1545 hrs, two destroyers of the 3rd plat moved to OHLUNGEN. At 0750 hrs, the section started out from SCHWEIGHAUSEN and at 0830 hrs, it fired seven rds of HE and two rds of APC at enemy troops in a brewery in the vic of 995 241. At this time one destroyer developed motor trouble and it withdrew and made its way back towards OHLUNGEN. At 1100 hrs, the section fired 8 rds of HE at enemy foot troops in vic of 985 243. At 1030 hrs, the 2nd plat moved one destroyer to a position vic of 025234, and the 1st plat moved one destroyer into position vic 020233. At 1500 hrs, the sec of the 3rd plat moved to positions in SCHWEIGHAUSEN.

At 0001 hrs, the 2nd plat gave direct fire support to the infantry who were trying to repulse an attempt by the enemy to cross the MODER RIVER. The frontal attack, which was perhaps only diversionary was stopped, but the enemy skirted the flanks and the positions of our destroyers then became untenable. An order to retreat from their positions followed and in the attempted withdrawal they became easy prey to anti-tank and tank fire and two of our M-10s were knocked out. Their positions originally good and well camouflaged were exposed when our infantry called upon them to deliver fire against enemy foot troops. The lesson learned was nevertheless costly and is set down here primarily to show that when infantry calls for fire on enemy foot

troops from M-10 guns, it infinitely increases the risk in which the M-10s already find themselves when placed in direct fire support--of infantry. The best camouflaged positions are to no avail if our infantry is not judicious in calling for supporting fire. Except in cases of extreme emergency it is the opinion of this Battalion that no TD position should be exposed or its camouflage jeopardized by routine firing on enemy foot troops, firing missions which could and should be taken care of by other weapons. To disregard such caution almost invariably results in our TDs being destroyed by anti-tank guns or SP guns hurriedly brought to the scene by the enemy once our location becomes known.

There was no change in the situation as regards Co C, But at NEUBOURG The 1st plat of Rcn Co relieved the 2nd plat, while the 3rd plat maintained liaison with the 222nd Inf Regt. Following is an account of the sterling efforts of the men who manned the two M-8s in NEUBOURG during a strong enemy attack, and the outstanding courage and leadership and initiative displayed by S/Sgt STEVENSON and Sgt DAWSON all of Rcn Co of this Battalion. The 2nd relieved the 1st plat of Rcn Co. The mission in this NEUBOURG sector was to maintain a listening and observation post for a tank warning system in the MLR of the 222nd Inf Regt sector. Intermittent artillery and mortar fire was falling in and near the town throughout the day and early evening. At 2000 hrs, a heavy concentration of artillery and mortar fell in the area and was immediately followed by and in great force also, an enemy infantry attack, which threatened to sweep the whole NEUBOURG area.

S/Sgt STEVENSON contacted infantry elements in the vicinity and volunteered the use of an M-8 to assist the infantry to reestablish and maintain the MLR. After obtaining information there, S/Sgt STEVENSON returned to his plat, and he told members the situation -- asked for volunteers, and the entire membership of both crews signified their willingness to go with him as he directed. Leaving one M-8 and crew under the command of Sgt DAWSON in NEUBOURG, S/Sgt STEVENSON proceeded east on the NEUBOURG-SCHWEIGHAUSEN highway which had been already cut in one place by enemy infantry. This car made two trips to and from a point approximately 1000 yds east of NEUBOURG and encountered numerous enemy foot troops, killing and wounding an unknown number. During the entire trip, the car was under very intense mortar and small arms fire and returned to NEUBOURG only after having fired its entire basic or combat M-8 ammunition load. This action definitely enabled our infantry in the vic of NEUBOURG to regroup and regain positions on the MLR, positions from which they were forced to withdraw a short while before because of the heavy automatic weapons fire from the enemy in the initial stages of the attack. Defeat of the enemy in this sector was further evidenced in the morning by the absence of the enemy in the forest of NEUBOURG.

Meanwhile, Sgt DAWSON, section leader of the 2nd section, 2nd platoon, after receiving the situation from S/Sgt STEVENSON, volunteered to assist in a mission to enable the infantry in the NEUBOURG sector to reestablish positions in the MLR which had been lost during the enemy's first attack. Moving his M-8 to the western edge of NEUBOURG, a continuous fire against the advancing enemy foot troops was maintained until a new base for automatic fire weapons could be established by our own infantry. After this was accomplished, Sgt DAWSON then moved his M-8 to the east edge of town in readiness for support to S/Sgt STEVENSON if same was needed. After S/Sgt STEVENSON returned a second time to NEUBOURG, Sgt DAWSON upon learning the basic load of STEVENSON'S M-8 had been totally expended, immediately moved out to patrol the NEUBOURG-SCHWEIGHAUSEN road. Enemy mortar and small arms fire continued to be very heavily concentrated and numerous enemy foot troops were still encountered on the trip to a point 1000 yds east of NEUBOURG.

On the return trip to NEUBOURG, less enemy foot troops were encountered, but an increased mortar fire was falling all along the roads. This M-8 likewise expended its basic load of ammunition and returned to NEUBOURG about 0400 hrs, 25 Jan 45. During the remaining hours of darkness, Sgt DAWSON continually moved his M-8 from one threatened area or point to another to reinforce the fire of the infantry by use of his MGs. The infantry replenished the depleted supply of cal.30 and carbine ammunition and also supplied hand grenades for both M-8 crews.

The exemplary leadership and courage displayed by these NCOs and all members of the crews did much to prevent the enemy from capturing NEUBOURG and sweeping on to overrun other positions. Two combat loads of cannister and HE (37mm) were expended as well as 3 boxes of cal.30 and 2 boxes of cal.50.

26 Jan 45 At 1530 hrs, the 3rd and 4th destroyers of the 2nd plat fired 22 rds of HE and 10 rds of APC at enemy vehicles and troops in buildings vic of 030246 destroying three trucks and killing a considerable number of the enemy. When the section ceased firing, there was one building burning. There was nothing else of importance in Co A's sector.

There was no change in CoB's positions. One platoon fired 26 rds of HE in support of the infantry with satisfactory results.

Co C received the usual amount of artillery and mortar fire during the period but there was no change in positions.

Rcn Co's 1st platoon received heavy enemy artillery fire in the NEUBOURG area and one man was wounded and evacuated.

The enemy front lines still remained the same namely, the northern bank of the MODER RIVER.

27 Jan 45 At 1330 hrs, the 2nd destroyer of Co A's 1st plat moved into position vic of 025231 and fired 12 rds of HE and 1 rd of APC at a suspected enemy OP vic of 024249. At 1700 hrs, the company moved its CP to WEITBRUCH. At 1900 hrs, the 3rd plat moved to 075213; at 2100 hrs, the 2nd plat moved to 059200; and at 2130 hrs, the 1st plat moved into position in the vic of 088194. The company was in support of the 315th Inf Regt.

Co C moved its CP to NIEDERSCHAEFFOLSHEIM exchanging positions and sectors with Co A. The 3rd plat took up positions in HAGENAU.

Rcn's 3rd plat accompanied Co A in its move to WEITBRUCH.

There was no change in the location of Co B or the BN CP.

28 Jan 45 There was no change in location during this day with one exception and that was Rcn's moving to NIEDERSCHAEFFOLSHEIM.

29 Jan 45 The Battalion received twenty E.M. as reinforcements.

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31 Jan 45 During the last two or three days in January, the situation was comparatively quiet. The attempts of the enemy to cross the MODER were repulsed with heavy losses. The line south of the river proved strong enough to withstand even the most bitter attacks made upon it. The incident at NEUBOURG and AT SCHWEIGHAUSEN previously mentioned in this report had a most decisive bearing upon the enemy's hopes for a sustained offensive. Had the enemy succeeded in their attack in that area, a further withdrawal might have been necessary upon our part.

After Action Reports (Cont'd)

About six days after the close of the period of this report, the Battalion was relieved, by another TD battalion and the 79th Infantry Division was relieved by the 101st A/B Division. The relief was most welcome and most necessary.

For the Battalion Commander:

Herbert M. Mettgen
HERBERT METTGEN, JR.

Major, RA, 81st T.D. Bn
Executive.